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DE RUEHGO #0805 2890839  
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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8284  
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1578  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 5062  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 8660  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6229  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 4079  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2044  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000805

SIPDIS

PACOM FOR FPA  
DEPT FOR EAP/MLS  
BANGKOK FOR USAID/RDMA, FAS, APHIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/11/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [EAGR](#) [EFIS](#) [PINR](#) [BM](#)  
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH BURMA MINISTER OF LIVESTOCK AND  
FISHERIES: AI AND NARGIS ASSISTANCE

Classified By: CDA Dinger for reasons 1.4 (b) & (d).

11. (SBU) Charge d'Affaires Dinger met with Government of  
Burma Minister of Livestock and Fisheries (MLF) BrigGen Maung  
Maung Thein in Nay Pyi Taw on October 10. The meeting was in  
response to a U.S. request for introductory calls on GOB  
ministers whose portfolios relate to U.S. interests.

Excellent collaboration on Avian Influenza  
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12. (SBU) Charge complimented the Ministry's collaborative  
work with the UN and donors, including the U.S., on AI  
efforts, noting there have been no new reported cases in  
Burma in nearly a year, and the previous cases, including one  
in a young girl (December 2007), were handled well. Charge  
inquired about coordination with neighboring countries that  
are presumed to be the sources for past cases in Burma. The  
Minister responded with a general brief on Burma's AI efforts  
and expressed appreciation for USG assistance. He noted GOB  
willingness to help the U.S. as well, as when U.S. embassies  
experienced an anthrax scare some years ago. MLF was  
prepared to test powder samples then, and would still do so  
today, if needed.

Ministry's Cyclone Nargis relief effort; broader aid request  
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13. (SBU) The Charge noted reports that MLF responded rapidly  
to the Cyclone Nargis disaster, giving replacement draft  
cattle, pigs, chickens, and ducks, offering fishing boats to  
local fishermen, and providing animal feed and veterinary  
care. The Charge affirmed that USAID/OFDA provided USD 1.6  
million to implementing partners for agriculture and  
fisheries development in the Delta as part of its broader USD  
50 million relief assistance. The Minister acknowledged the  
importance of USG aid in the cyclone-response effort which,  
from his Ministry's perspective, is progressing well. He  
added that more U.S. aid in a broader context would be very  
welcome. He mentioned particularly a need for help to build  
Burma's dairy herds in light of the recent China milk scare.  
Could the U.S. provide high quality frozen bull semen?  
Charge took the request on board but noted that the key to  
additional international assistance is a political opening in  
Burma.

Bio notes

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¶4. (C) Brigadier General Maung Maung Thein used an interpreter during his conversation with Charge, though he appears to understand spoken English reasonably well. His father and older brother were killed by Burmese communists when the BG was one year old. His family then moved to the outer edges of Rangoon. He entered the Army after school, became an infantry officer, and received several wounds in combat against ethnic insurgents. He said he still has shrapnel in his leg. As a Major, around 1988, he worked with U.S. officials in counter-narcotics efforts in Burma. Asked his plans for the regime's planned 2010 elections, he said he will take off his uniform and run for office. Regardless of the outcome, he said he will not return to the Ministry for Livestock and Fisheries, believing he has served long enough in that role. Note: our understanding is that Maung Maung Thein has been an unusually able minister, willing to cooperate collegially with donors to meet important goals.  
DINGER